

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

**FORMER INS INSPECTOR SENTENCED
IN MARIJUANA/ALIEN SMUGGLING CASE**

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - November 23, 2005

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that Michael Taylor, a former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Inspector in the San Diego District was sentenced today to serve 46 months in custody, followed by four years of supervised release, and a \$10,000 fine by United States District Judge Napoleon A. Jones, Jr. Taylor pled guilty pursuant to a plea agreement to conspiring with a number of codefendants to import marijuana and bring in undocumented aliens through his primary inspection lanes at the San Ysidro, California Port of Entry. During the course of the investigation, Taylor resigned his position with the INS (now known as the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection).

The indictment against Taylor was returned on February 25, 2004; and Taylor was arrested while returning from an overseas trip in May 2004. The charges in the indictment alleged that the conspiracy began in or about January 1998 and continued up to and including August 2001. Nine other defendants were

charged in the indictment which was divided into marijuana importation (In connection with his guilty plea, Taylor admitted to allowing in approximately 860 kilograms) and alien smuggling (Taylor also admitted to allowing in up to 24 undocumented aliens).

United States Attorney Lam stated, “no person is above the law, and this prosecution reinforces that important principle.” According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward C. Weiner, who prosecuted the case, Taylor admitted that he was co-opted by a smuggling organization and that he spent money he received on travel, failed business ventures, automobiles, and other material things.

The prosecution of Taylor and others associated with him was a cooperative team effort led by the Border Corruption Task Force, consisting of agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Professional Responsibility and Office of Investigations.

DEFENDANT

Criminal Case No. 04cr0504-J

Michael Taylor

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Conspiracy to Import Marijuana
(21 U.S.C. §§ 952, 960 and 963) (Count 1)

Conspiracy to Bring in Aliens for Financial Gain
(18 U.S.C. § 371 and 8 U.S.C. §1324(a)(2)(B)(ii)) (Count 7)

MAXIMUM PENALTY

Five years to 40 years in custody, \$2,000,000 fine

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security
Immigration and Customs Enforcement